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The Voice of One: "

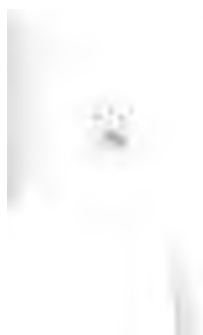
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THE VOICE OF ONE

THE VOICE OF ONE

By
JAMES H. COUSINS



LONDON
T. FISHER UNWIN
PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1900

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Castle fund

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TO MY
BELOVED MOTHER

AND TO MY
REVERED FATHER

I dedicate
THIS BOOK

FATHER, I cannot sing to thee
Of all I feel and all I think:
The shallow streamlet babbles free.
Mother, I cannot sing to thee—
My love is as broad and as deep as the sea,
And song lives only on its brink.
And so, I cannot sing to thee
Of all I feel and all I think.

NOTE

OF the pieces in this volume, six ("The Railway Arch," "A Song of Decadence," "At Scrabo," "The Southern Cross," "A Twilight Song," "Heaven and Earth"), have already appeared in volume form, and are here reprinted as representing all of his earlier work which the author would care to have remembered.

The author thanks the Editor of the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for permission to publish "The Gulf Stream" and "The Captive Butterfly."

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"THE VOICE OF ONE"

I.

I AM the Voice of One who cries :

Lo, I have lived my little day ;
Have looked within a woman's eyes,
And seen them covered up with clay.

And I have laughed as well as wept,
Have found my foes and made my friends ;
Through mighty issues I have slept,
And waked to unmomentous ends.—

Have companied with hope and fear :
Have followed Love's mysterious star,
And dreamed it infinitely near,
Yet found it infinitely far.

And I have seen my fairy gold
Turn all to dull, misshapen lead ;
And I have shivered in the cold,
And wished me harboured with the dead.

And sometimes I have longed to free
My soul from all that chains and mars,
To taste the quiet in the sea,
The peace that lodges with the stars.

II.

I am the Voice of One who cries :
Lo, I have stood beside the deep,
And I have watched the twilight skies
Grow grey with mystery and sleep,

While soft clouds held the last of light
And furrowed all the sunset way,
Where bent the silvern scythe of night
To reap the aftermath of day.

And I have heard strange voices speak
In words, half uttered, half withdrawn,
While, far away, a mountain peak
Put on the vestment of the dawn ;

And o'er th' adoring world there hung
A silence as the Lord passed by,
And from day's flaming altar swung
His golden censer up the sky.

III.

I am the Voice of One who cries :

Lo, here I cannot stop nor stay.

I am not good, I am not wise,

I only follow far away.

And, seeing not, I yearn for sight

To read the heart of praise or blame,

To catch the beam within the light,

And feel the fire behind the flame ;

Or, wrapt from all the tyrant hours

That write their names in tears and blood,

I long to pluck immortal flowers,

And bathe me in a cool, clear flood ;

And know that thing for which I feel

With frustrate fingers blind and dead ;

And turn Truth's never-ceasing wheel,

And from its distaff spin my thread.

And so, with ever watching eyes,

I live my life from day to day.

I am the Voice of One who cries,

And, crying, wander on my way.



MISCELLANEA

ADRIFT IN MOONLIGHT

(TO BESSIE AND WILL.)

I.

OUR oars point skyward, left and right,
And, on the soft, slow stream,
Amid the balmy hush of night,
Across the moon's broad beam,
We slip from shine to shine, thro' shade
By immemorial poplars made.

II.

To such an hour as this belongs
A sense—not joy, not woe ;
A hum of half-remembered songs,
And laughter long ago ;
A sadness caught from other years,
Too vague for words, too sweet for tears.

And, mingled by the gentle wind
With sounds we once have known,
We hear strange music, half-divined,
From spirit-bugles blown,
And feel the wafture of the wings
Of mystic, unbegotten things.

III.

In such an hour as this, the soul
Shakes free from sense that cloyes,
And sights afar her starry goal,
And thrills with nobler joys
Than those vouchsafed when lithesome limbs
Danced to impassioned Paphian hymns.

We break and drop the chains of earth,
And feel at home in Heaven';
And with the strength of kingly birth
A mighty wish is given
To snap the sunset's brazen bars,
And snatch the secret from the stars.

IV.

From such rare hours—as brief as few—
Our dearest hope is this :
To win an ampler voice and view,
To draw a deeper bliss,
And hear reverb'rate thro' our dreams
The thunder of immortal themes.

THE ADVENT OF ERINN

[The early colonists of Ireland came from the East, in the morning of history, bringing with them warm-tinted sentiments and thoughts, many of which are still prominent features in the Celtic character. Music and art are co-existent with the story of Ireland. They have lain fallow for a time ; but the day for the breaking up of the fallow ground is arrived, and the world once again beholds the advent of Erin with hands outstretched to claim her inheritance of glory.]

I.

*Who is she that comes from Eastward, in the pathway of
the sun,*

*Girt with magic of the morning, shod with splendours
of the South ?*

*She, of time's clear dawn the daughter, glad in life but late
begun ?*

*She, with eyes aflame, and fearless ?—she with music-
making mouth ?*

B

This is she from Orient valleys where, in gardens of the
night,
High o'erhead, in grape-like clusters, hang the lustre-
laden stars :
This is she who seeks a dwelling on the utmost bounds
of sight,
Whence she marketh mountain-music timed to billow-
beaten bars.

II.

Lo! she finds a favoured island in the wide and West-
ward main ;
There she liveth, and she loveth, and a singing soul is
born.
And where'er her smile alighteth there awakes a joyful
strain,
As the sun to sudden music smites the million strings
of morn.
There her children wax in wisdom with the waxing of
the years,
Thro' the pruning of the sword-stroke, and the purging
of the flame ;
And her fire-refined spirit smileth sadly thro' her tears,
Till her children's children crown her with a fair and
faultless name.

III.

What, though 'neath invading billows, that would fain
have been her grave,

Flowing Westward, Westward, Westward, in their wake
a dower of dearth,

She hath bent her brow benignant ; she hath smiled as
wave on wave

Did but sweep her sacred semblance to the corners of
the earth !

Now, from every clime and kindred, comes a cry, but
late begun :

*Who is she thus girt with glory, shod with splendours
of the South ?*

*She who brings us dreams of olden days we dreamt for
ever done ?*

*She with eyes by hope rekindled, with new music in her
mouth ?*

FAREWELL

So, lady, since thy lips have given
Inexorably thy decree,
That, with a ruthless blow, hath riven
The cords that drew me close to thee,
And sent adrift, 'neath cloudy skies,
A soul whose lodestar was thine eyes,

I take them back, the thoughts high-born
That sprung, at touch of thee, from prison ;
That sweet dulciloquy that morn
Oft blushed to hear, from lips new-risen,
Purged by a vision-kiss to bear
More fitly thy dear name in prayer.

I take them back, the whispered words
That only sea and sky have known ;
The songs I shared with bees and birds,
And only sang for thee alone ;
The aspirations and desires
That snatched from thee their clearest fires.

I take them back, mayhap to hold
Forever dungeoned in the dark,
Since hope's white dove, deject and cold,
Has fluttered homeward to its ark ;
Since icy winds about me blew,
And chilled my roses into rue.

And yet I shall not rashly swear
To stifle all my affluent heart,
Whose dower of love some soul must share :
('Twas all for thee, but now we part !)
The jewels of my life *may* shine
Around some other brow than thine.

Yet deem not false the hands that press
Some hand unknown, as thine of yore ;
Nor think he would have loved thee less,
Who learns to love another more,
When sundering years obtusion bring,
And bind again the broken wing.

My thought has gained a wider scope,
My lips have learned a purer word,
My prayer has found a surer hope,
Since thou my all of being stirred !
I lose thee now, but now I gain
A larger life, baptised in pain.

So, dearest one, a last good-bye,
I shall not ask thy tongue to speak,
The riddle of that stifled sigh,
The meaning of that tear-wet cheek.
Farewell—farewell.—No last caress?—
I came to curse : I only bless !

THE RAILWAY ARCH

I.

THERE it stands, as it has stood,
Theme for bards, and theme for seers,
Mute to sun and tempests rude,
To the swift express of years ;

Stretched across from bank to bank,
Where the rabbits flash and go ;
Where the fir-trees, rank by rank,
Gaze upon the track below,

As the train, at man's behest,
In the calm or tempest's teeth,
Speeds with lightning in its breast,
And the thunder underneath.

II.

There in many a rift and rent,
Many a bird finds friendly cover ;
And the toiler, homeward bent,
Whistles as he passes over ;

And the children from the town
Climb its parapets and strain
Half a hundred throats to drown
With a cheer the passing train.

III.

Yet how many children, toilers,
List' to what that arch would say
To the thousands of earth's moilers?
Dull of ear and listless they.

Ah! adown the track of time,
In the world's great sidings lying,
Many a theme for many a rhyme
Is unmarked by thousands, flying

After all the fen-fires, darting
In the damps and swamps of life,—
Fires of meeting and of parting,
Hate and love, and strain and strife.

IV.

There it stands, oh, how I love it!
For it speaks of weal, and woe;
For the thousands pass above it;
For the thousands rush below:

And, attune to whir and clatter,
Wide and wider does it span,
High o'er time and sense and matter,
High o'er life and death and man,

Stretched from age to age unborn ;
And above it in a stream
Pass, unceasing night and morn,
Shapes like those in Jacob's dream:—

All the souls of all the ages,
All the ghosts of all the years,
Priests and prophets, saints and sages,
Sweet-breathed bards and broad-browed seers,

Who from many a cloudy station
List' the whirring of the wheels,
Bounding on without cessation,
Dragging progress at their heels.

Who, as children from the town,
Throng the parapets, and strain
Form and voice in flashing down
Warning signals to the train

Speeding on, at man's behest,
In the calm, or tempest's teeth,
With the lightning in its breast,
And the thunder underneath.

A SONG OF DECADENCE

I WONDER if there still remain
Some echoes from the songs of old,
Or what the measure of the strain
The future shall unfold ?

The voice that breathed across the years,
And came, and went, and passed the bar,
And sang the battle-song of tears,
Sounds small, and faint, and far ;

And men have found another chord,
An offspring, not of heart, but head ;
And gold is God, and lust is Lord,
And Love lies stricken dead.

Ah, me ! the race goes blindly on
And leaves the old familiar ways ;
And still, earth-weighted, flowers the dawn
To still ignoble days ;

And men, as sheep within their folds,
Grove round their world with great, sad eyes ;
And hate the hand that still withholds
The secret of the skies ;

Or, deeming God an idle tale
Withdrawn from lore of ancient shelves,
Themselves would reckon by the scale
And measure of themselves.

How mean the stature of the song
Of our inglorious-glorious time,
Attenuating, as along
It moves from that great prime

When Milton, in the midnight hours,
Lay waiting for the mystic breath
Of God to touch his soul to flowers
Of song that smile at Death.

O singers of the years to come,
Be yours the large and liberal scope ;
Sing sweetly—or for aye be dumb—
Of God, and Love, and Hope,

Encircled by no little line
Of gain or loss, of time or sense,
Nor, bent at Mammon's soulless shrine,
Your birthright part for pence ;

But bend an arm across the past,
And finger all the vibrant years,
Till sunlight, on our shadows cast,
Makes rainbows of our tears.

AT SCRABO, CO. DOWN.

THE rugged rock against the sky
Heaves high a tower-topped crest,
Whence widens out beneath the eye
The realms of East and West.
Here lies a land but seldom sung—
This crude, majestic crown,
And that white sea that moves among
The fertile fields of Down.

Unsung ! save when an alien lyre
A moment's space was strung,
And Browning fanned a little fire,
And Helen's Tower was sung.
Yet storied homes of sept and clan
Are here, and—dim and vague—
Anear and far, Ben Madighan,
And Keats-sung Ailsa Craig.

Unsung ! and, wherefore, lovely land ?
Hast thou not ample store
For song, from yonder ocean strand,
To Strangford's shining shore ?

Hast thou not throbb'd to foamy flanks,
And sound of Saxon steel,
To crash of Cromwell's rattling ranks,
And Clansmen of O'Neill?

And yet, not all thy songful crown
Is strife of right with wrong ;
Here, limpid lark-streams trickle down
A hundred peaks of song ;
There, silent sheep and lambkins lie—
A white, uncertain thing—
Like lingering snow that fain would spy
The secret of the spring.

The roaming robber breezes catch,
And hither upward float,
A lusty lilt and vagrant snatch
From some far rustic throat ;
And blustering by, with strident shout,
From scenes of festive glee,
That libertine of flower and sprout,
The bacchanalian bee.

All life is song : and song is life
To souls with these akin,
Unfettered by yon city's strife,
Unsullied by its sin.

Some part of these fair fields and coast,
Some waft of phantom wings,
Will haunt my heart, a welcome ghost,
A hint of higher things.

Dear land of love, and happy lot
Of merry maids and swains,
Worthy the martial muse of Scott,
Or Virgil's pastoral strains ;
Loved land, this tongue thy song would share,
This votive soul is thine ;
Thy lips are loud with praise and prayer—
Pray God they kindle mine.

A MUSICIAN'S MEMORIAL

*On the unveiling of the statue to Sir ROBERT
STEWART, on the Leinster Lawn, Dublin.*

I.

HATH sculptured marble ought of power to keep
 Invincible to ages marching by
A soul that throbbed in oneness with the deep,
 A spirit claiming kindred with the sky?
Nay! no poor mortal wreath the immortals need ;
 Nor set we here this form to keep *his* fame
 Forever fresh,
But that *our* eyes, beholding it, may read :
 “A god on earth once bore a human name,
 And wore our human flesh !”
O'er no wide waste of questioned earthly ground
 He stooped to read pale Thought's divining rod ;
But strongly built, on viewless rungs of sound,
 An immaterial ladder up to God.
He matched for man the song of bee and bird ;
 He voiced the sound that thrills thro' all the sea's
 Ebbing and flow :
But we can only guess what strains he heard,
 Whose spirit-tones, in unimagined keys,
 Dull ears could never know !

II.

He hath gone inward to the source of song
We heard as 'twere the shutting of a door—
Then silence. Now to us but dreams belong
That somewhere on a far, euphonious shore,
He marks fair Miriam's timbrel thrill again,
Or royal David smite ecstatic strings ;
Perchance doth pause
Where Pylades repeats the Grecian strain
That died in its own tuneful triumphings,
Slain by too swift applause !

He hath moved upward to the starry height,
The calm Olympus of Eternity ;
And, clothed with clear and undistracting light,
Stands with the offspring of Mnemosyne,
Who, singing, sought great Jove's august abode,
Timing melodious throats to dancing feet,
Until the Nine
Softened his soul with music, and the god,
Bending an arm benignant from his seat,
Raised them to rank divine !

AN IRISH NATIONAL ANTHEM

God save our native land !
Lay Thine Almighty hand
On Mount and Shore.
Save her from all things vile,
And bless her with Thy smile,
Till she shall be an " Isle
Of Saints " once more.

God save our blood-stained land !
Oh ! may the blazing brand
Of war and shame
Ne'er light again her skies ;
But, strong in all things wise,
May peace, in love-lit eyes,
Gird her with flame.

God save our sorrowing land !
As with a wizard's wand,
From her fair fields
Sweep far distraction's blight—
Blind offspring of the night—
Till weakness, wed to might,
Co-sceptre wields.

God save our ancient land !
May she be ever manned,
 From first to last,
With strength that ever seeks
To grasp the golden streaks
Of light around the peaks
 Of her proud past.

God save our holy land !
So long by hatred banned,
 So long distressed ;
Yet still unseared in soul,
Tho' sundered, ever whole,
And pressing toward the Goal
 Of perfect rest.

THE "NAME ROCK," ARDMORE

FULL many a fathom far below
The long waves lash and leap,
And muffled thunders come and go
Along the dizzy steep.
Above, the sea-birds rise and fall
Within the welkin wide ;
Behind, a sheer and rocky wall ;
Before, the rolling tide.

The sea-pink's everlasting head
Is lifted hereabout ;
The hardy spinach makes its bed
Where weaklings dare not sprout ;
And spread abroad, in shape distraught,
Lie boulders not a few,
Like some old world from which was wrought
The fashion of the new.

Here stand we 'twixt the wave and sky,
Like nymphs of sea or air,
The glinting sunlight in your eye,
The sea-breeze in your hair. . . .

Strange place, strange company for tears,
But, ah ! your hand I hold
'Mid names that cheat the vandal years—
The new amid the old.

A thousand feet in other days
These ancient paths have clomb,
Where storied rock and ridge displays
The tracks of sprite and gnome ;
A thousand hands, ambition-nerved,
Have weathered wind and spray,
And here the crude memorial carved,
And passed in dreams away,

As we shall pass—then wherefore bend
The bright recording knife ?
Our impress we might better lend
To some lone heart and life ;
And yet, if men each other slay
To scale the heights of fame,
'Tis little ill if here we stay
To carve another name.

LOVE'S DILEMMA

I.

LAST night I sought thee in my dream,
And found thee, not—as most thou art—
Silent ; but from thy lips a stream
Of music flooded all my heart.

I knew not which were greater bliss,
To listen to thy silvern voice,
Or stop its current with a kiss,
For equal seemed the blissful choice ;

Till once you paused, and then my soul
Flew forward with a gladsome bound,
And sought, and found the rosy goal,
And all thy voice in silence drowned.

But even then the stars took up
A joyous hymn, and thee they named,
The while I drained the brimming cup
Of gladness, till my being flamed,

And shot thro' all the veins of night,
And burst in showers of golden rain,
And swept the shores of sense and sight,
And brought me back to life—and pain.

II.

Thou still art silent. Yea, and I
Might learn in time to gaze on you
By *day* without a thrill or sigh,
But *night* doth fire my soul anew
With love, which kindles at the glow
That o'er your happy face doth creep,
As, hand in hand, we singing go
Across the sunny fields of sleep.
And thus 'tis mine, this woeful plight,
To know not which were best—to pray
That day might never change to night,
Or night may never more be day.
Yet if 'twere mine the choice to make
Of one sole bliss, one joy supreme,
Save thee, methinks I'd answer : " Take
All else, but leave, ah, leave my dream ! "

THE GULF STREAM

DEAF to the storms that rage and rend,
And blind to suns that gleam and go,
Intent on one large, ancient end,
Broad, deep, and silent is thy flow.

Thy face is ever forward set,
Unawed by flaming tropic cloud ;
Howe'er thy pathway be beset
By Arctic wanderers, pale and proud.

Nor all the vaunted might of man,
In leagued impulsion on thee hurled,
Could alter thy primordial plan—
The pure ablution of the world !

Still wendest thou thy solemn way,
A pilgrim, stately, reverent, mute ;
Not in the enforcement of a day,
But in a purpose, resolute,

Co-habitant in days of dark
With that divinely-voiced decree,
Which floated forth earth's haltless barque,
Enisled within a shoreless sea.

And thou shalt ever onward wend,
Like truth's resistless abluent stream,
Whose widening flow shall never end
Till day resolves our night's high dream,

Of man unmarred by self and sin,
Uprisen from the smirching sod,
Who wears without, and holds within
The image, once again, of God!

THE CAPTIVE BUTTERFLY *

*After the prose of JOHANN GOTTFRIED VON
HERDER.*

THOU lovely, light, and airy thing,
Flitting on wing from flower to flower.
Blossom and dew are thy banquet brief,
Thyself but a leaf that lasts an hour.

Oh, say what sylph of sky or shore
Thus purpled o'er thy dress so gay ;
Of morning odours moulded thee,
And set thee free for one short day ?

* The above is a juvenile attempt to exemplify in English a peculiarly Irish metre. Referring to these verses, Dr Douglas Hyde says: "I am very glad to see you turning your hand to this modern adaptation of a common Irish metre, which, as I have often pointed out, possesses, at least to Irish ears, a considerable charm when skilfully managed in English. No English poet has attempted it, so far as I know, except Samuel Lover in his poem, 'What would you do love, when I am going?' and this is very strange, because this interlinear rhyme suits, I think, both the English and German languages as well as the Irish, and is capable of being used with great elasticity. I hope you will compose some more in these metres, and let us judge how far they are capable of manipulation, and of producing a really good effect, in English."

Within my hand thy little heart
Doth stop and start in pain and fear ;
Doth taste death's bitterness, and shrink
To brave the brink thou deemest near.

But fear not thou. I shall not slay.
Go ! wend thy way by branch and bough :
No longer live in sore suspense ;
Fly far from hence ! a symbol thou

Of what my soul shall surely be,
When fully free from earth to rise,
And flit among eternal flowers,
In fadeless bowers, 'neath cloudless skies.

HYMN FOR PEACE

Tune SAWLEY

FATHER of life, and Lord of Death,
All mighty and all good !
Breathe on our souls Thy Spirit's breath,
And speak Thy Fatherhood :

For, lo ! on one far, ancient throne,
A monarch names Thy name :
Thy Kingship, Lord, a king doth own,
And brotherhood proclaim.

Oh ! let the olive-bearing dove
Bring hope through hopeless skies,
And perfect faith of perfect love
In faithless hearts arise.

From plain and steppe, from mount and fjord,
Sad eyes are turned to Thee.
Oh ! break the bond, and snap the sword,
And shake the peoples free.

Bid, Lord, the watching nations cease
From warring, and begin
On bloodless battlefields of peace
Unsullied bays to win.

Oh ! speed the word now uttered forth,
That bids the strife be done ;
Till linked in love are South and North,
And East and West are one !

A PRAYER

I.

I PRAY not for the victor's palm,
The force of fortune, or the calm
 That fame and honour give ;
Nor yet desire the prescient eye,
Forethoughtful how to fitly die :
 I ask to truly live,

Not for a few unfruitful years,
Through all the mystery of tears
 Immovably sedate ;
But with well-tutored heart and brain
To sound the depths of others' pain,
 Or with them rise elate.

II.

Be mine the grace to take—and bless
The hand that weighs—life's more or less ;
 To know, or die unknown ;
To feel fond hands upon my head,
Beloved and loving, or to tread
 Life's wine-press all alone,

Full sure beyond this dreamful night
There lies a land of perfect light,
 Where nought unlovely mars ;
Where mortals lose all mortal pains,
And kiss the hand that holds the reins,
 And guides the suns and stars !

LOVE'S DEVOTION

WHAT fortune in the Future's lap lies 'folden
 We may not guess ; nor say if, on her face,
 Veiled and reverted, plays a smile all golden,
 Or frown on frown their deepening furrows trace.

But this I know, with firm unawed assurance,
 Whate'er the measure of my days may be,
 No joy can dim, no grief dissolve its durance,
 No changings change the love I bear to thee !

Yea, were it mine to write my history's pages
 In living letters on the scroll of fame,
 No blazoner of smiling states and sages
 Could match the music thou dost give my name.

Or if, in lieu of bays my brow adorning,
 Life braids a crown of thorns, a wreath of rue,
 Still would my heart, thro' all the blight of scorning,
 Preserve its best and purest thought for you.

If life were gain, sweet, sweet would be the gaining
 To lay its battle-trophies at thy feet ;
 No field unwon, and no emprise remaining,
 Crowned with thy kiss, and in thy smile complete.

If life were loss, dark, dark would be the losing :

I dare not hope our paths should never part.

To thee be peace : for me the sad perusing

Of mem'ries of an unforgetting heart.

But, come what may, exulting or repining,

Love's light unclouded shall my soul illumine,

In midnight darkness, or in noonday shining,

“And bear it onward till the crack of doom.”

A BATTLE PICTURE

THERE was stillness, dreadful stillness, on the waters of
the bay,

There was silence, awful silence, in the sky ;
And our lips were shut, and wordless, as we westward
turned to stay

For the all-momentous issue of the battle drawing
nigh.

Then my fingers touched your fingers, found them
trembling, clasped them tight,

And our thoughts went out to seaward on the breeze ;
And we watched the cloudy legions of the army of the
night

Set their squadrons on the mountains, plant their
outposts in the trees.

One by one the flying cohorts of the Day-king paused,
and played

All their bright and brazen ordnance high and low ;
And from out a flame-fringed bastion sallied forth a
Light Brigade

Striking far its fiery lances thro' the foremost of the
foe.

Soon the fight was fought and ended, and across the
battle-plain

Glowed the bivouac-fires of midnight far and near ;
But we knew the light that lit them was the glory of the
slain,

And we smiled to think how day-dawn soon would
smite them front and rere.

UPWARD

*To a Prima Donna, whose singing directed the steps
of a search party when she was lost on Mont
Blanc.*

THEY sought you far and wide among
The welded winters of Mont Blanc,
Till, lo ! a vagrant verse of song,
 Star-high and clear,
Pointing the path to right from wrong,
 Fell on the ear.

And man, 'mong crags of doubt and wrong,
In search of truth, both late and long,
Has *stooped* to every strain of song
 That charmed the ear,
While she sings high the stars among,
 Did he but hear !

SONGS

"FORGIVE—BUT NOT FORGET!"

I.

If I have pained thee by a look,
A thought, a deed, a single word,
Beyond what thou art willed to brook
From one by love unbounded stirred ;
If I have dared to break the vow
Of silence thou hast round me set,
I can but humbly pray that thou
Forgive—but not forget !

If I have trembled to thy touch,
As waves to wind that comes and goes ;
Or brooded o'er thee overmuch,
Or dreamed a worm might love a rose
If I have bent before thy brow—
That shrine where tapers twain are set—
And worshipped unbesought, wilt thou
Forgive—but not forget ?

II.

Forgive.—This boon my heart would claim,
To give thee in my prayers a place ;
To twine sweet thoughts around thy name,
And feel their fragrance in my face ;
To keep unplucked for aye, as now,
This flower within my being set
Of love for thee—so much wilt thou
Forgive—but not forget ?

But not forget.—Oh, write me down
Upon thy memory : let me nurse
This thought, though shadowed by thy frown—
“ I bear the blessing of her curse ! ”
Let Fortune what she please allow,
Till on my life the sun hath set—
I care no whit, if only thou
Forgive—but not forget !

THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

AFAR from his wife, from his sons and his daughters,

The fisherman grapples for gain or loss ;

Beneath him the silent midnight waters ;

Above him the blaze of the Southern Cross :

And ever his thoughts on the breeze hie homeward,

As he calls to the watcher again and again—

“ Oh, what of the night—is it dark or bright ? ”

And ever there cometh the old refrain—

“ The skies are clearing, the dawn is nearing,

The midnight shadows fly.

The Cross is bending, the night is ending,

The day is drawing nigh.”

Again, on the storm-swept winter waters,

He battles the billows that tumble and toss ;

And he thinks of the weeping of wives and daughters,

As the clouds fly over the Southern Cross.

Ah, then in the hour of his heart's despairing,

When sails are rending and cables strain,

How sweet to his ear come the words of cheer,

And the sound of the watcher's old refrain—

*"The skies are clearing, the dawn is nearing,
The midnight shadows fly.
The Cross is bending, the night is ending,
The day is drawing nigh."*

.

Far out, far out on Life's wild waters,
Where storms are howling, where breakers toss,
How many of earth's fair sons and daughters
Are drifting and dragging to gain or loss.
But ever the Stars of Hope are shining,
Through calm and tempest, through wind and rain;
And soft through the night, be it dark or bright,
The heart still echoes the old refrain—
*"The skies are clearing, the dawn is nearing,
The midnight shadows fly.
The Cross is bending, the night is ending,
The day is drawing nigh."*

THE SLEEPER

JONAH i. 6.

O'ER waves than mountains steeper
The vessel rolled and flew !
Like some heart-broken weeper,
On deck loud prayed the crew.
But one lay sleeping in the side.
The master saw, and bent, and cried :
"What meanest thou, O sleeper ?
Our moments may be few !"

The gulfs grew deep and deeper
'Twixt waves that shrieked in spray.
Small hope in toil to keep her
Afloat in such a fray !
To stony gods they wept and sighed.
The sleeper slept. The master cried :
"What meanest thou, O sleeper ?
Thou too arise and pray !"

And straightway rose the sleeper.—
" 'Tis mine your lives to save
From Death, the pale-faced reaper,
And ocean's stoneless grave,"

He said. Then o'er the staggering side
He met the white, cold-clasping tide.—

Now gentler breezes sweep her,
And calm is on the wave !

O brother—Jonah—keeper

Of brothers manifold !

Deem not thy days as cheaper

Than baubles got for gold.

Up ! Night was given for dreams—not day.

Up ! Stoutly step on duty's way.

Who knoweth but thou, O sleeper,

Some souls in trust may'st hold !

THE DESIRED HAVEN

THERE was not a sail to windward seen,
And not a spar to lee ;
But, East and West, with flying crest,
Rode the chargers of the sea.
The skipper gripped the reeling rail,
His eye was wild, his cheek was pale,
As he looked for a glimpse of the moon ;
And the word was passed from bridge to mast :
“ Lads ! Heaven, or Hell, or Troon ! ” *

A-port, was a sea that raved and reeled,
A-starboard, mad as hate !
And the clouds drew down with a fiercer frown !
And the crew could only wait.
There was nought to be done but hold for life,
To think one thought of a child or wife,
And hope for the ending soon,
When, far thro' the night, would gleam the light
Of Heaven, or Hell, or Troon.

* Founded on fact.

But the eyes grew weary, the hands grew stiff,
The lips too numb to pray ;
And the billows ground, with a sickening sound,
Strong timbers and bloodless clay.
But a stout heart stuck to the whirling wheel,
And he thought that he caught a midnight peal
Blown South from a sleeping "toon," *
As they found their rest where God deemed best,
And it was not Hell, or Troon !

* Town, so pronounced in Scotland.

NOW—AND THEN

WHAT shall I sing, dear love, to thee,
As I stand by the edge of the sleepless sea,
Where the white sea-bird to his mate doth call,
And the wavelets in music rise and fall,
And you are so far, oh ! so far from me—
What shall I sing, now, love ! to thee ?

*When the ocean hath never a smile by day,
Nor a kiss for his bride, the shore ;
When he ebbeth for ever and ever away,
And returns to his love no more ;
When the earth, and the sea, and the sky depart,
I shall hide thee, my love, in mine inmost heart.*

What shall I sing, dear love, to thee,
When we stand by the deep eternal sea ;
When the billows of death before us roll,
And sorrow falls heavy on mind and soul ;
And you are so near and so dear to me—
What shall I sing, then, love ! to thee ?

*When the stars shall have dropped from the sky at last,
And the sun into blackness rolled ;
When earth, and the things of earth, have passed
As a tale that hath long been told ;
When the moon and the waters have melted away,
I shall love thee, my love, as I do to-day !*

A SWORD SONG

A young Scottish chieftain, having come to Erinn to learn swordsmanship under the tuition of Cuchullin, finds that his prospective tutor has been slain. In a council of war he draws his blade—which has been handed down from father to son—and thus addresses it:—

SWORD of my sire !
Thy glance of fire
 Hath shone o'er many a field ;
And ne'er of yore
Did he who bore
 Thee to a foeman yield !

Nor shall thy light
Be plunged in night,
 Though low he now is laid,
And cold, and dead,
Whose skill could wed
 Sure hand to perfect blade !

By all whoe'er
This blade did bear
 In battles lost or won,
No coward spot
Thy form shall blot,
 O sword of sire and son !

Cuchullin's shade
Behind thy blade
 Shall breathe a burning breath,
Once passion-rife
When breathed in life ;
 Thrice mightier now in death !

"WHEN THOU ART NEAR"

SWEET bells are ever sounding in my soul

When thou art near.

To songs of joy the stars above me roll

When thou art near.

Wan Winter smiles at strange new thoughts of Spring ;

Bright birds, long silent, heavenward take wing ;

Fulfilled of purest light is everything

When thou art near.

Whate'er of joy or grief the past contains,

When thou art near,

Is all forgot—the present but remains

When thou art near.

All thoughts and feelings born of time or place

Find their sole centre in the gentle grace

That flits around the wonder of thy face,

When thou art near.

My heart is thrilled with rapture nigh divine

When thou art near ;

But oh, what joy, dare I but whisper, " Mine ! "

When thou art near.

No thought unworthy e'er my soul can mar ;

Time hath no terrors, life no single jar ;

Death smiles benignant ; Heaven is not far,

When thou art near !

**"WHEN FAME THAT PURSUES
THEE"**

WHEN fame, that pursues thee,
And fortune, that woos thee,
 Have wrapt thee about with their charms ;
 When pleasure enfolds thee with amorous arms,
Nor e'er doth a rapture refuse thee :
 Oh, then, in the hour of thy power,
 When glories shall flower in thy bower,
 Remember a heart
 That ne'er giveth in part,
But loseth its life if it lose thee !

What matters the pleasure
Of learning and leisure,
 Or days that are dazzled with joy,
 If a glory unshared with another will cloy,
And a lone heart grow sick of its treasure ?
 Oh, then, in the hour of thy power,
 When sorrows ne'er bud in thy bower,
 Remember a soul
 That hath given thee the whole
Of the length and the breadth of its measure !

A TWILIGHT SONG

OFF have I watched, as the sun was sinking
Adown in the Westward, across the sea,
A long, shining chain of glory, linking
Mountain to mountain, and all to me ;
And richer the radiance, and softer the shading
That gathered to kiss him a fond " Good-night,"
As over the hill-tops slowly fading
He left but a glimmer of dying light.

And to-night I am thinking of old days sinking
Adown in Life's Westward, o'er Memory's sea,
And a chain of sweet thought is binding and linking
Each to the other, and all to me ;
And richer the radiance, and softer the shading
That gather to kiss them a fond " Good-night,"
As over Time's hill-tops they're fading, fading,
With but a remembrance of after light.

SONNETS

LOVE'S ADVENT

I CANNOT set a finger on the place,
Or time, or circumstance, and surely say—
'Twas thus, and then, across the gathering grey
Of my dark life shot the first golden trace
Of love for thee. I see within thy face
Something that has been with me all the way,
Affinity and reflex night and day,
And, lo ! my heart feels, knows, and loves apace.

How ? Why ? I cannot tell. I only know
One wide, white love has cancelled all the sum
Of all life's lesser loves. I can but speak
As might the watcher on some northern peak
Long night-bound, who, Eastward, beholds a glow,
And cries : "The day, the glad, great day is come !

THE STATUES IN FRONT OF
TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN

I.

BURKE

CLEAR—with the clearness of a mortal eye,
Not spotless all, but, even as the light,
Perfect in imperfection—did his sight
Behold the bound and stature of the sky
Of man's desires ; and sweep afar and nigh,
And sound the depth, and scale the utmost height
Of all he was—and was not, all he might—
And might not be ! This much did he descry.

And his was statesman-craft that knew no call
Save truth and right ; but with unswerving wing
Sought one high goal ; nor paused at any hest
That recked not all men's good, nor heard thro' all
Life's loud and multitudinous murmuring
One human heart beat in one human breast !

II.

GRATTAN

HAIL ! Boanerges, Son of Thunder, hail !

 Standing for aye, with dumb, outstretchèd arm ;

 But silent never, though thine ancient charm

Storms not our ears, nor lingers in the gale

About those pillars near thee, stark and pale

 As ghostly limbs flung skyward in alarm

 For greatness gone. Time hath no hurt nor harm

To rob thy trumpet lips of all avail.

For tuned were they to thought whose pinion wide

 Spreads far abroad, and time and place outsoars,

 Ransacks the past, and thoughts of men to be

Shatters and ever shapes—ev'n as the tide

 Unbuilds and builds, when, at earth's iron doors,

 Knock the imperious knuckles of the sea !

III.

GOLDSMITH

No thunder rolling round the sweating skies,
No storm by elemental hate incurred,
Nor flaying fire, attend upon thy word ;
But something like a still, small voice doth rise
At thy behest, O thou, with wisdom's eyes,
So foolish ; and some sweetly singing bird
Pipes such a lovely lie that men are stirred
Nigh to believe the world grown pure and wise !

O gentle mover of the happy tear !
O sweet, glad father of the stainless smile !
Thy voice, like bells across some lonely fen,
Grows doubly sweet with each removing year,
For thou, on lips unschooled in greed or guile,
Hast sung thyself into the hearts of men !

A SPRING TWILIGHT

HIGH on a forest platform, shut from sight,
But to the soul, by hearing, doubly near,
A songster, throbbing with the opening year,
Outsoars in song his wing's supremest flight ;
While, thro' the enchanted hour 'twixt light and light
Of sunken sun and rising moon, mine ear,
Doth catch from vocal leaf and river clear
Sounds softened by the saddening touch of night.

Mine eyes are closed. Sweet music's power hath given
Wings to my soul, to soar, and leave behind
Life's dull, dead inessentials ! What new sky
Is this, where, unamazed, from some strange heaven,
Hear I the harp of Orpheus on the wind,
And mark Apollo's shade speed singing by ?

LOVE'S APPEAL FOR LOVE

Oh, let me love thee, if but one brief hour !
Oh, let me take from off thy luscious lips,
The fruit of knowledge which, to him who sips,
Brings joy unreckoned in the angels' dower !
Oh, love me, love, if but a single hour,
With pure, unmeasured love—though stinging whips
Of fire, next moment, into black eclipse,
Drive me from out thy Eden's passionless bower !

Then thou mayest set an angel at the gate
Of thy inviolate heart, with burning blade
Flashing. I shall not weep ! I shall have known
Life's fairest guerdon. I shall stand elate
Upon life's summit, strong and undismayed,
Immutably, immortally alone

HEAVEN AND EARTH

[In the beginning, according to a legend of the South Sea Islanders, the Heaven and the Earth were wedded : then was the Golden Age. But something occurred which marred the primal union : the Heaven and the Earth were separated ; and the dew-drops are the tears which Nature sheds over the sad divorce.]

TRUTH in untruth ; wisdom on Folly's tongue,
And substance in a shadow ! Hear ye this :
Erewhile, 'mid transports of primeval bliss,
In starry ears a bridal song was sung,
And Heaven and Earth, in mutual rapture, strung
Ethereal harps, and took one reeling kiss,
Till, sated with much joy, Earth grew remiss :—
But love was rife, and ah ! the Earth was young.

O trembling tears of dawn in Nature's eyes,
Forget your sadness ! Lo ! methinks the hour
When recreant love turns loveward, thrills the dome ;
Earth lifts mute praying hands in tree and flower,
And Heav'n, in all the windows of the skies,
Hangs nightly lamps to light the wanderer home !

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